

WORKING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Returning Money to its Rightful Place

I voted in favor of legislation that will return revenue paid through the sale of Long Island Sound commemorative license plates back to a dedicated Long Island Sound account.

No New Tax on Shellfish

The legislature defeated a misguided and harmful proposal to put a new tax on shellfish caught in Long Island Sound. It would have cost jobs for our local fisherman.



Supporting Fodor Farm

Norwalk received a \$100,000 grant from the state Commission on Culture and Tourism for the rehabilitation of the Fodor Farm house. It is home to a locally popular community garden.

Norwalk Community College Health & Science Center

NCC is receiving \$18.3 million from the state to build a LEED-certified facility that will house three floors devoted to classrooms, laboratories, simulated patient care rooms and a health and fitness center. The NCC Foundation has also raised over \$20 million from private sources to provide funding toward the new center as well as for endowment scholarships and programs.

Cracking Down on Illegal Street Racing

This year, a new law creates tougher fines and penalties for those who engage in illegal street racing. It also allows law enforcement officials to temporarily impound motor vehicles used in street racing for 30 days, effectively removing them from local streets and communities.



One of the more gratifying things I do as a state legislator is provide recognition from the entire state for the people, organizations and activities right here in our community. That's why I was proud in September to present an official citation from the State of Connecticut to Bell Island in Rowayton to celebrate their 100th year of incorporation.



I was proud to help facilitate the efforts of a group of students from Brien McMahon High School's Senators Community Foundation as they commemorated National Child Abuse Prevention Month in April. They did so in dramatic fashion by placing 1,531 stuffed animals on the State Capitol's South Lawn to call attention to each of Fairfield County's victims of child abuse.

Helping Those Who've Sacrificed for Our State and Country

We expanded eligibility for the Military Relief Fund to immediate relatives of Connecticut-domiciled armed forces members, including Connecticut National Guard members who are not on active duty. This fund is used by the state to pay for essential personal or household goods or services, such as repairs, uninsured medical services, transportation or school supplies if paying for them is a hardship because of a member's service.

Cutting Red Tape for Disabled Veterans

A new law eliminates the requirement that disabled veterans under the age of 65 file a letter of disability with their town every year. Many disabled veterans feared that their local property tax credits would be lost. The new law will prevent this from happening again.



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LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVES

A Budget for Our State

The budget I voted for, while imperfect, helped move our state forward. We cut over three billion dollars, spent less, raised the income tax on couples who earn over one million dollars a year and protected vital investments for students, seniors and middle-income families.

For example, family resource centers in Norwalk will continue to operate for working moms and dads, seniors won't have to make choices between health care and other necessities and state colleges—like NCC and UConn—can continue to serve students. In addition, education cost sharing grants to municipalities are flat funded so that local officials don't have to pass a greater burden on to property tax payers.

I am still going to keep a watchful eye and a sharpened pencil on our revenue and spending numbers. As your budget watchdog, it is my job to make sure we are getting everything we can for your hard-earned dollars.

Making our State Government More Efficient

Results Based Accountability (RBA), a budgeting approach that brings simple, disciplined language to the budgeting process, requires policymakers to review and make decisions about funding based on the success of the program. Using RBA to analyze state programs will help to determine which are working well and where the state can wisely cut spending and create savings for the taxpayers.



Growing Green Jobs in Connecticut

In order to help grow jobs, our "green jobs" bill would have required the state to apply for any federal green jobs funding and to establish a program to create green jobs and promote green energy and conservation. Unfortunately, this bill was vetoed by the governor.



Health Insurance for Autism

Help is on the way for the thousands of families in Connecticut with children who suffer from autism spectrum disorders. A new law requires certain health insurance policies to cover the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorders, including behavioral therapy for a child age 14 or younger and certain prescription drugs and psychiatric and psychological services.



Protecting Children from Dangerous Chemicals

Children will be better protected from dangerous chemicals often found in baby bottles. Bisphenol-A (BPA) is an industrial chemical used to make the plastics that are found in many products, including baby bottles and water bottles. The General Assembly this year banned the sale, manufacture and distribution in Connecticut of any infant formula or baby food stored in containers made with BPA beginning October 1, 2011.



Healthy Schools, Healthy Kids

We expect our children's schools to be clean and safe. That's why the legislature voted this year to phase in the use of "green" cleaning programs in all of Connecticut's public schools. Switching to a green cleaning program not only helps to keep harmful chemicals away from growing children, it also helps to save money.

Fighting Breast Cancer With Early Detection

A key part in the fight against breast cancer is early detection, which is why the General Assembly enacted legislation that focuses on communication of mammographic breast density information to patients. When applicable, all mammography reports given to a patient must include this notice: *"If your mammogram demonstrates that you have dense breast tissue, which could hide small abnormalities, you might benefit from supplementary screening tests, which can include a breast ultrasound screening or a breast MRI examination."*

Helping Families on the Brink of Foreclosure

Connecticut has been a leader in its effort to keep people in their homes and stabilize property values for all homeowners. A new law now requires banks and homeowners to work together to explore options before any foreclosure takes place. The law also improves regulation of mortgage professionals and expands the banking commissioner's enforcement and investigative authority.



Protecting Your Property Values

Foreclosed homes often stand empty and uncared for and can become a target for vandals. Studies have shown that once abandoned, foreclosed property can bring down neighboring property values and increase neighborhood crime. This year, the legislature enacted a new law that requires any bank, lender or holding company that owns a foreclosed property to register so that municipalities can enforce any state statute or municipal ordinance on the maintenance or repair of real estate.



I was joined by Attorney General Blumenthal in June to urge the governor to sign this important legislation.

Felony Charges for Mortgage Fraud

Potential homeowners trust that a mortgage lender or broker is acting in good faith. When that trust is broken, however, unscrupulous lenders could now face a felony charge of residential mortgage fraud. A person who is convicted of just one count could face a \$5,000 fine and up to five years in prison.